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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Development of an Installation for Detecting Radioactive Particles in the Air at the Krent Firm in Hradek

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1. Between 15 April and 15 May 1948, Ing. Kuhn (fnu) at the Krent firm in Hradek initiated the construction of an air filter to detect alpha particle radiation in the air. Source believes that Kuhn developed the idea with the help of either Dr. Slouka (fnu) or of an official of the State Mines Management who was connected with the Jachymov mines and who may have been Dr. Koblic. Kletecka (fnu) actually constructed the apparatus and completed the greater part of the installation. Ing. Krent took part in the experiments as an observer only. Ing. Bradna also had knowledge of the purpose of the experiment. The installation was operated by Kletecka, and Kuhn determined the time and duration of the experiments.

2. The installation consisted of a strong ventilator equipped with an "Atas" model air fan having 1400 r.p.m. and of a rotor with a removable part containing a filter consisting of fine paper wool (manufactured by the Horak Company, Prague-Strasnice). The air drawn in by the ventilator passed through this filter. The whole apparatus was about 1200 mm long, the diameter of the ventilator being about 500 mm. The filter was an ordinary mechanical filter used to purify air from mechanical particles such as smoke and dust, and was made by the Horak firm in Prague-Strasnice. Two sizes of filters were used, one having a diameter of 100 mm and the other a diameter of 120 mm. Source believes that eventually only the smaller filter was used. There was only one air intake having a diameter of 100 or 120 mm which was set to face the direction of the prevailing winds, i.e. E-SE, but the direction was adjustable. The apparatus was fixed in a tree in front of the plant at a height of about twelve meters. The installation was purely experimental, in order to discover whether such tests could be carried out successfully and with positive results. Source believes that it was assured that any traces of radioactivity would be the result of American experiments, since there were certain indications that the Russians were not yet carrying out experimental explosions. The interception of any radioactive particles depended solely on their dissemination in the air stream; therefore no question of range entered into Kuhn's experiment. The possibility of a propagation of the radiation by means of a chain reaction was discussed, but the original hypothesis of particles being simply disseminated in the air was accepted.

3. Kuhn first stated that he had made positive tests between the end of May and the beginning of June 1948. On two occasions he said that he had obtained information as to the date of an explosion set up on one of the islands in the Pacific.

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that four days after the date of the explosion he had measured a considerable quantity of alpha particle radiation in the filters. He further stated that the presence of alpha particle radiation proved that the filters had intercepted mechanical particles which, at the explosion, were diffused into the atmosphere and carried away in the clouds. These were the only times, known to source, when alpha particle radiation was actually measured. Source believes that after this time no further positive measurements were obtained and that the filters were removed for measuring every morning and every night. Kuhn, however, frequently ordered the installation to be stopped and then later started again, which would indicate that after June he was making successful readings and that he had the installation stopped only during the periods when no readings were obtained.

4. At a later date, in June 1948, Kuhn set up two more installations, one at the house of his father-in-law B. Suk at Kralupy and the other in the villa of Dr. H. Slouka at Prague VIII, Pod Vlachovkou #9. Source believes that Kuhn did not obtain any positive measurements from these installations. Kuhn discussed the possibility of building a network of these installations with the cooperation of meteorological stations in order to try to obtain an indication of the direction or the location of explosions, but this plan was not carried out.
5. The following persons had knowledge of the fact that alpha particle radiation had been detected:
 - a. Ing. Peelnikov of the Russian Commercial Mission in Prague.
 - b. Ing. Posik, Russian physicist at the Jachymov mines.
 - c. Ing. Budek, Departmental Chief of the Ministry of the Interior, who claims to be charged with the supervision of the Hradek plant. Source believes that Budik was later transferred to the Ministry of National Defense where he is in a high position.
 - d. The following men employed at the plant in Hradek: Kuhn, Krent, Lad, Kletecka, Beran, Bradna, and Dr. Slouka. After the early part of June 1948 Kuhn did not reveal the results of his measurements and experiments even to his closest co-workers, and probably not even to the Russians. Source believes that Kuhn's secrecy was due to reasons of prestige rather than due to distrust.
6. Kuhn tried to persuade the Russians to build a modern scientific laboratory, having a high-voltage installation, in order to carry out experiments in the field of atomic physics. Kuhn discussed this matter with Ing. Peelnikov and Ing. Nikoforov, both of whom belonged to the Russian Commercial Mission at Prague XIX. Kuhn was asked to work out a detailed plan. This plan, as well as photographs of the location where Kuhn was planning to set up his laboratory near Hradek near Usti nad Orlici, were taken to Moscow by Fierlinger (fnu), Commercial Delegate for Trade with Russia.